

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4707

The Honorable Scott Pruitt
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

April 17, 2018

Dear Administrator Pruitt:

While I understand that the Environmental Protection Agency has already hosted three public listening sessions and one public hearing on the proposed repeal of the Clean Power Plan, I strongly urge you to host an additional public listening session in my congressional district, Washington's 7th. There your team will be able to meet with members of the community, some of whom are adults and children suffering from chronic respiratory issues resulting from poor air quality. I am confident that after visiting my district and talking to my constituents, you and your team will reconsider your decision to repeal the Clean Power Plan and replace it with a less-flexible rule that is predicted to provide far fewer carbon reductions and cause greater harm from other pollutants.^[1]

By repealing the Clean Power Plan and replacing it with the "inside the fenceline" approach that you advocate, you will be adding one more hardship to the litany of environmental injustices that millions of Americans, including my constituents, face on a daily basis. Particulate matter emitting facilities such as the ones regulated by the Clean Power Plan are disproportionately sited near low-income and minority communities, populations that that reside in my district. In fact, African-Americans bear an especially pronounced burden in exposure to particulate matter emitting facilities, one that is 1.54 times higher than is faced by the overall population.^[2]

By hosting a listening session in my district, you would be able to hear directly from these communities that will most acutely feel the negative health impacts of the Clean Power Plan's repeal. It would also provide my constituents—many of whom could not have traveled to one of the already-held listening sessions—with an opportunity to learn more about your plans and share their concerns.

Chief among these is the concern that repealing the Clean Power Plan would leave Americans exposed to dangerous pollutants such as sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, and ozone pollution, as well as their attendant hazardous health effects. For instance, research has shown that children raised in heavily polluted environments suffer from a 10 percent reduction in overall lung size—a reduction that can be permanent—as well as a higher risk of contracting asthma, bronchitis, and other respiratory diseases.^[3] As a result children have consistently

^[1] Charles Driscoll et al., "U.S. power plant carbon standards and clean air and health co-benefits," *Nature Climate Change*, volume 5, pages 535–540 (2015).

^[2] Mikati, I., A. F. Benson, T. J. Luben, J. D. Sacks, and J. Richmond-Bryant. Disparities in Distribution of Particulate Matter Emission Sources by Race and Poverty Status. *American Journal of Public Health* DOI: 10.2105/AJPH.2017.304297

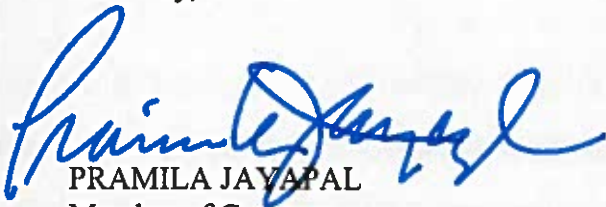
^[3] Wood, H. E., N. Marlin, I. S. Mudway, S. A. Bremner, L. Cross, I. Dundas, A. Grieve, J. Grigg, J. B. Jamaludin, F. J. Kelly, T. Lee, A. Sheikh, R. Walton, and C. J. Griffiths. 2015. Effects of Air Pollution and the Introduction of the London Low Emission Zone on the Prevalence of Respiratory and Allergic Symptoms in Schoolchildren in East London: A Sequential Cross-Sectional Study. *PLOS ONE* 10(8): e0109121.

been encouraged to avoid these irritants due to the damage that can be inflicted upon their developing respiratory systems, as well as to their future prospects.

Failing to limit carbon pollution from our nation's power plants will also increase the threat of health harms from climate change. Without action to cut carbon, communities across the United States face a hotter and more polluted future—and higher rates of respiratory illnesses such as asthma and chronic bronchitis, along with increased emergency room visits as a result.^[4] At the same time, our hospitals, nursing homes, and other health care facilities will be at greater risk of floods driven by sea level rise^[5] and increasingly catastrophic wildfires.^[6]

With all of this in mind, I feel that it is imperative that you and your team visit my district and hear from my constituents and their families. It is my sincere hope that you will take from this visit an understanding of the myriad environmental injustices that they face—injustices that will only deepen if the Clean Power Plan is repealed. As the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, it is your responsibility to ensure that the basic human right of clean air is protected for all Americans, including the most vulnerable among us.

Sincerely,



PRAMILA JAYAPAL
Member of Congress

^[4] Perera, F. P. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5289912/>

^[5] Managan, A.P., S. Widerynski, S. Saha, and E. Hines, "Flooding risk of medical infrastructure: a national assessment of hospitals and nursing homes in flood hazard zones," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Presentation to American Public Health Association National Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia, 2017.

^[6] Adelaine, S.A., M. Sato, Y. Jin, and H. Godwin, "An assessment of climate change impacts on Los Angeles County (California USA) hospitals, wildfires highest priority," *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine* 32, no. 5 (2017): 556-562, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/prehospital-and-disaster-medicine/article/an-assessment-of-climate-change-impacts-on-los-angeles-california-usa-hospitals-wildfires-highest-priority/6E9ABCCC7A7A36170B6724E65A510C14>.